



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Australia's recent immigrants: where do they fit in?

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Recent immigrants were more likely to be in the labour force and have higher skill and education levels than their counterparts who arrived in Australia earlier, according to a new study based on 2001 census data released today.

The study, by Professor Graeme Hugo from the National Centre for the Social Applications of Geographic Information Systems at the University of Adelaide, is a comprehensive analysis of who Australia's recent immigrants are, how they have adjusted to Australia and where they live.

The author, Professor Graeme Hugo, said that the improved labour market standing of recent immigrants sees them more likely to work in the leading sectors of the economy, in jobs which recognise and reward their skill and education levels.

"They are well represented in the nation's high income earners with 6% earning over \$1,500 per week, compared to 4% of Australian-born people," he said.

"Immigrants are also significantly influencing regional population growth patterns, by selectively settling in particular parts of Australia. The study showed that the vast majority (82%) of overseas-born Australians settled in major urban areas, while only 7% chose to live in rural Australia."

More than one in five Australians (22% or 4,105,643 people) were born overseas. Similarly, Australian-born people with at least one parent born overseas made up 17% of the population.

Almost four in ten recent immigrants spoke only English, compared with nearly six in ten who arrived prior to 1996. Other languages spoken by recent immigrants are Chinese (15% of migrants) and Arabic languages (4%), with less than 1% speaking any of the main European languages.

This analysis confirms that international migration has continued to be one of the major sources of social change in Australia between 1996 and 2001.

ABS Director of Census Products and Services, Michael Beahan, said this report was issued under the Australian Census Analytic Program (ACAP), which highlights the value of census data in examining social issues within Australia.

"This program provides opportunities for researchers to access census data for in-depth reviews. In accordance with ABS policy, researchers do not have access to any information that could identify an individual," he said.

Further details are available in **Australian Census Analytic Program: Australia's Most Recent Immigrants** (cat. no. 2053.0).

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